CURRENT CLAIMS

Below is a listing of the Claims currently pending in the present application. Please be advised that Applicants previously cancelled Claims 20-30 due to a restriction requirement and election of Claims 1-19.

1. (Original) A flexible reinforcement member for a communications cable comprising:

a plurality of high modulus fibers;

a primary saturant coupled to said

plurality of high modulus fibers, said primary saturant having a melting point below approximately 300 degrees Celsius and a melt viscosity of less than approximately 1000 centipoise; and

a higher molecular weight, water-swellable polymer topcoat coupled to said primary saturant.

2. (Original) The flexible reinforcement member of claim 1, wherein said primary saturant has a melting point between about 100 to about 150 degrees Celsius and a melt viscosity of less than 500 centipoise.

3. (Original) The flexible reinforcement member of claim 1, wherein said plurality of high modulus fibers comprises a plurality of sized high modulus fibers selected from the group consisting of a plurality of sized or unsized aramid fibers and a plurality of sized or unsized poly(p-phenylene-2,6-benzobisoxazole) (PBO) fibers and a plurality of sized or unsized carbon fibers and a plurality of sized or unsized high silica glass fibers and sized or unsized high tenacity, linearized polyethylene fiber.

4. (Original) The flexible reinforcement member of claim 1, wherein said plurality of high modulus fibers comprises a plurality of glass fiber strands.

5. (Original) The flexible reinforcement member of claim 4, wherein said plurality of glass fiber strands comprises at least one glass fiber bundle, each of said at least one glass fiber bundle comprising a plurality of glass fiber filaments.

6. (Original) The flexible reinforcement member of claim 2, wherein said plurality of glass fiber strands comprises a plurality of glass fiber filaments and at least one glass fiber bundle, each of said at least one glass fiber bundle comprising a plurality of glass fiber filaments.

7. (Original) The flexible reinforcement member of claim 1, wherein said primary saturant comprises a low molecular weight mineral wax.

8. (Original)The flexible reinforcement member of claim 7, wherein said low molecular weight mineral wax is selected from the group consisting of a low molecular weight microcrystalline wax, a low molecular weight polyalphaolefin wax, a low molecular weight polyethylene wax, or a modified (oxidized or maleated) polyolefin such as polyethylene or polypropylene, and blends thereof.

9. (Original) The flexible reinforcement member of claim 1, wherein said primary saturant comprises a blend of a low molecular weight microcrystalline wax and a styrene butadiene rubber, wherein said blend is between approximately 0.1 and 99.9 percent by weight of said low molecular weight microcrystalline wax and between approximately 0.1 and 99.9 percent by weight of said styrene butadiene rubber.

10. (Original) The flexible reinforcement of claim 9, wherein said blend comprises a 50/50 by weight blend of said low molecular weight microcrystalline wax and said styrene butadiene rubber.

11. (Original) The flexible reinforcement member of claim 4, wherein said plurality of glass fiber strands comprises a plurality of sized glass fiber strands selected from the group consisting of a plurality of sized or unsized E-type glass fiber strands and a plurality of sized or unsized ECR-type glass fibers.

12. (Original) The flexible reinforcement member of claim 1, wherein said primary saturant comprises approximately 0.1 and 35 percent of the total weight of said flexible reinforcement member and wherein said high molecular weight water-swellable polymer topcoat comprises between approximately 0.1 and 35 percent of the total weight of said flexible reinforcement member.

13. (Original) The flexible reinforcement member of claim 12, wherein said primary saturant comprises approximately 5 and 20 percent of the total weight of said flexible reinforcement member and wherein said high molecular weight water-swellable polymer topcoat comprises between approximately 5 and 20 percent of the total weight of said flexible reinforcement member.

14. (Original) The flexible reinforcement member of claim 12, wherein said primary saturant comprises approximately 10 and 15 percent of the total weight of said flexible reinforcement member and wherein said high molecular weight water-swellable polymer topcoat comprises between approximately 10 and 15 percent of the total weight of said flexible reinforcement member.

15. (Original) The flexible reinforcement member of claim 1, wherein said high molecular weight water-swellable polymer topcoat is selected from the group consisting of ethylene vinyl acetate (EVA) polymers, block copolymers of polybutylene terepthalate, copolymers of long chain polyether glycols, thermoplastic elastomers, olefins, urethanes, polypropylene, polyethylene, polyurethane, low molecular weight mineral wax, polyacrylamides and blends thereof.

16. (Original) The flexible reinforcement of claim 15, wherein the glass transition temperature (Tg) of said flexible reinforcement is greater than about 400C.

17. (Original) The flexible reinforcement member of claim 12, wherein said high molecular weight water-swellable polymer topcoat comprises an ethylene vinyl acetate polymer topcoat.

18. (Original) The flexible reinforcement member of claim 1, wherein said high molecular weight water-swellable topcoat is a blend of water-swellable polymer topcoat and non water-swellable topcoat.

19. (Original) The flexible reinforcement member of claim 18, wherein the water absorbency for the reinforcement member is between about 111 to about 142 percent by weight.

20-30. Cancelled.